APPENDIX G.

Concluding remarks of the Dewan at the close of the Session on 20th October 1921.

GENTLEMEN,

In concluding the proceedings of this Session, I wish, with your permission, to make a few remarks. One noteworthy feature of the discussions this time was that an unusually large number of members took part in the debates on the more important subjects and I should like to compliment the members on the able and intelligent manner in which facts were presented and argumnets marshalled. It is also a great satisfaction that the discussions were on the whole, characterised by moderation and mutual good will.

Educational subjects have as usual elicited the greatest interest. The levy of the "Education Cess" was one of the subjects discussed at great length. The question is one of the utmost importance as the liberal policy of extending education in rural parts cannot be carried out unless additional funds are made available. The raiyat population naturally views with disfavour any proposal that increases the burden of taxation on them, but they are extremely keen on securing improved facilities in the matter of education; and it is very gratifying indeed, that the members representing the rural population were generally agreeable to the levy of the cess. The power of levying the cess as you know is in the hands of the local bodies, and I ask you all to use your influence with the District Boards and Municipal Councils with a view to their adopting early measures for levying the cess to the extent necessary to enable the Department to carry out at least the urgent items in the programme of reforms.

As regards the question of scholarships and freeships, I have explained the position in my opening address. I need here say only that it is not the intention of Government to reduce existing educational facilities although some readjustments of the expenditure on education will be necessary. You have urged that the system of merit scholarships should not be abolished. This, I may say, is not contemplated. You have also drawn attention to the promise contained in my address of October 1919 that the expenditure on scholarships will be brought up to three lakhs. It is not intended to reduce scholarships below this limit.

Another subject which elicited a certain amount of discussion is that referred to by the members as the "Sringeri Circular." The Government Order in question consists of two paragraphs. The first is to the effect that all subjects of His Highness are entitled to admission to every institution maintained from State Funds, without difference of caste, colour or creed. I am glad to find that this principle is generally agreed to, although some members demur to its application in particular localities.

Under the second para of the order, schools started as a protest against the admission of panchamas into Government institutions are not entitled to grants-in-aid, although they are not denied recognition if they conform to departmental standards. Some cases in which recognition has not been granted were referred to in the course of the discussion. If the managers are dissatisfied with the orders of the Department, it is open to them to appeal to the Government, and the facts will then be carefully gone into. As regards grants-in-aid, the question of amending the grant-in-aid rules so as to admit of grants being given to schools not open to all communities has been under consideration and early orders may be expected. While on this subject I might also refer to the representation that admission to Sanskrit Colleges maintained by the State should not be restricted to certain classes. As mentioned during the discussions, the report of the Committee appointed to consider the subject is before Government, and it will be published for general information and discussion, before orders are passed.

Some of the members urged the need for providing facilities for Industrial and Commercial Education. I trust that the statistics furnished by my worthy colleague the First Member of Council in regard to the action taken by the Government will show

that Government are fully alive to their responsibilities in this matter. I am glad that undue expenditure of public money on school buildings was deprecated. I may say, I am fully in sympathy with this view having personally seen the structures which are used for schools in Ceylon. A Committee had been appointed to go into the question of designs for school buildings and their recommendations are now under the consideration of Government.

Among subjects relating to the Revenue Department, the re-establishment of Taluk Treasuries at District Headquarters will receive early consideration. The fact that the kists for land revenue in the malnad are fixed earlier than in the maidan has been a standing complaint of the malnad raiyats. I have already stated that the Government are prepared to grant your request in this connection and formal orders will issue before the next collection season.

In regard to the remission of wet assessment for failure of crops, it was urged that the new rules as foreshadowed in my opening address do not go as far as the Bombay rules. I can however assure you that when the rules are published you will see that the relief given will not compare unfavourably with what is given elsewhere.

Another subject of perennial interest which has been discussed with some vehemence during this session relates to the responsibility of an entire holding for the assessment on every survey number comprised in it. The complaint that lands on which assessment has been paid by a co-sharer are not infrequently forfeited and brought to sale is not without foundation. With a view to obviate the hardships involved in the present system, the Government have already directed that when any person pays the assessment for a particular survey number included in a holding, the fact should be recorded in the *Khirdi*. The Revenue Commissioner has also issued circular instructions directing that in the recovery of the arrears due on a holding, lands of which the assessment has not been paid should first be proceeded against. These directions will be incorporated in the Revenue Rules, with such subsidiary instructions as are necessary so as to remove as far as possible, the hardship complained of.

Turning to the judicial subjects I am glad to be able to tell you that the question of permitting suits against Government which has been repeatedly urged by the Assembly has nearly reached a final stage and that a decision may be expected within the next few months. The extension of the scheme of separation of judicial and executive functions to the remaining four districts has been urged but I fear the present financial situation does not admit of this. It is hardly possible to open Second Class Magistrate's Courts in all Taluk Headquarter towns. Government will endeavour to meet the present inconvenience by conferring second class powers on Bench Courts wherever possible. The scheme of village courts appears to be widely appreciated and the request of the representative of the Chamber of Commerce for the establishment of Panchayet courts in the cities on the lines of these courts affords testimony to the usefulness of these institutions.

Amongst the subjects discussed at great length the one that took up the longest time was the recent order of Government on the subject of the representation of all communities in the public service. I believe the discussion on this subject which was continued for three days, has been of value in clearing misunderstandings and enabling each side to appreciate the other's point of view. A large number of the Brahmin members of the Assembly have presented a memorandum explaining their position with regard to this question. They have expressed themselves as "perfectly sympathising with the legitimate aspirations of the non-Brahmins to secure a larger representation in Government service." and this must be as gratifying to the backward communities as it is to the Government. While agreeing that preference may be shown to qualified candidates of backward communities, they have asked that the result aimed at should not be brought about by the complete exclusion of the Brahmins from admission to the service for any particular period. Such exclusion, as I have explained more than once, is not contemplated by the Government. The chief point emphasised in this memorandum is that in attempting to satisfy the aspirations of the backward classes, the efficiency of the service should not be reduced or sacrificed. This is quite a legitimate position to take up and I can assure the members that in giving effect to their orders, the Government will take care to see that efficiency is in no way impaired. The educational and other qualifications required for first entry into the various grades and classes of appointment will be very carefully examined and prescribed, and persons not possessing such qualifications, whether Brahmins or non-Brahmins,

will not be appointed. After this discussion and interchange of ideas, I venture to hope that the cordial relations which subsisted between the several communities in the State will be restored.

The Mysore Newspapers Regulation was the subject of an interesting discussion. In view of the tone of recent writings in certain sections of the Press some of the members were in favour of the provisions of the Regulation being put into operation in respect of offending newspapers and one member even went the length of suggesting the suppression of vernacular newspapers altogether. The general sense, I take it, is that the drastic provisions of the Regulation may be removed from the statute book, but that some effective control over the Press should be retained by the Government. The question of amending the law on the subject is, as I said in my opening address, now before the Government and the views of this Assembly will receive due consideration. The spirit of mutual forbearance and good will that has generally characterised the discussions on controversial subjects during this session encourages me to hope that the Press will also be animated by the same spirit and that its tone in future will be such as to justify its being given a full measure of liberty.

The discussion of the question of women's franchise was a lively one. Although a new question in Mysore, it has been debated upon in some of the British Indian Provinces; and the franchise has been extended to women in respect of local bodies and of the local Legislative Councils in varying degrees in some of the Provinces and sister States. Here, after a spirited discussion, lasting for nearly three hours, the Assembly has given an adverse vote, 39 voting for and 58 against the extension of the franchise to women. This was perhaps to be expected in view of the inherent consvervatism of the representatives of the rural population. Speaking for myself, I hope that at no distant date a strong body of public opinion will be created in favour of women, who possess the necessary qualifications, being enabled to take their legitimate share in the direction of public affairs. Meantime the question will also be placed before the Legislative Council at an early opportunity.

In regard to the important question of constitutional reform which was discussed this evening, I may say that while sympathising with the natural aspirations of the people in this matter, the Government feel that this subject cannot be rushed. Conditions in Mysore are not on all fours with those in British India and it will not do merely to copy what is considered suitable for British India. The question of adopting measures for giving the people an increasing share in the administration is engaging the earnest attention of the Government. The views of the Assembly as indicated in the discussions to-day will be submitted to His Highness the Maharaja for his gracious consideration, and I trust it will be possible to evolve a scheme of reforms which may be placed before the Assembly for discussion when we meet next.

Gentlemen—Before concluding let me again express my appreciation of the high level at which the discussions were maintained and of the spirit of harmony that generally pervaded the Session. It will give me great pleasure to submit to His Highness Maharaja the sentiments of loyalty and devotion that you have expressed in the course of the discussions and your resolution of loyal welcome to his illustrious guest, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to whose visit to the State next January we are all so eagerly looking forward.

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